

## Transitioning Youth to the Employment and Community First (ECF) Choices Program for Adult Services ([Policy 19.8](#))

### What you need to know:

DCS refers all youth in DCS custody who are approaching adulthood, age 15 and up **and** diagnosed with an intellectual disability (ID) **and/or** developmental disability (DD) to the Employment and Community First (ECF) Choices program for services/supportive housing prior to their mandated release from custody.

### Important Timeframes to remember:

- ◆ At age 15 and up FSW begins the referral process to determine if the youth qualifies (see section A of policy [19.8](#))
- ◆ At age 17, FSW begins application process for obtaining SSI (see section B of policy [19.8](#))
- ◆ 6 months prior to youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, FSW submits request for legal assistance to determine conservatorship (see Policy [19.10, Designating a Medical Decision Maker for Youth with Disabilities Aging out of DCS Custody](#))
- ◆ 3 months/90 days prior to youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, FSW completes the online referral to the ECF program through the TennCare website, here:  
<https://tcreq.tn.gov/tmtrack/ecf/index.htm>  
(see Section D of policy [19.8](#))

**It is important that all of these steps are completed timely so that the youth's transition to adult services does not get delayed.**

*Tip: It may be helpful to create a calendar appointment in Outlook with the identified deadlines listed above to remain off the overdue list.*

If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to reach out to [Herbert.Smith@tn.gov](mailto:Herbert.Smith@tn.gov) or [Shannon.M.Patterson@tn.gov](mailto:Shannon.M.Patterson@tn.gov).